understood that the Indian Shipbuilders Association (ISBA) has represented to the Ministry of Surface Transport that subsidy should be given to the Indian Shipbuilders in order to make them level with overseas shipbuilders in international competitiveness.

The Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) is also a member of the ISBA. The representation is under examination in the Ministry of Surface Transport.

(e) A. 5.5 ton Bollard Pull Tug "Veeru" was built and exported to the Government of Maldives at a cost of US $ 1.2 million, by GSL. GSL has targetted to procure one export order during 1997-98.

Preserving INS Vikrant as a Symbol in Museum

4148. SHRI K.M. KHAN:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have been requested to preserve I.N.S. Vikrant as a symbol of partriotism and nationalism;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to consider the requests made for preservation of I.N.S. Vikrant; and

(d) if so, details thereof, and if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) to (d) A proposal has been received to convert the decommissioned ship INS Vikrant into a naval museum. Decision in this regard would depend, inter alia, on feasibility of such conversion.

Ex-officio Membership to M.Ps. and M.L.As in Cantonment Boards

4149. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have been requested to give Ex-officio membership to M.Ps and M.L.As in 63 Cantonment Boards of country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have taken any action on these requests so far, and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Requests have been received from the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Shri Babu Rao Paranjape, M.P. and Shri Nandi Yelliah, M.P. to give ex-officio Membership to M.Ps and M.L.As. in the Cantonment Boards.

(c) and (d) It has not been found feasible to agree to the proposal, as under the existing frame-work of the Cantonment Act, 1924, there is no provision for nominating M.L.As to the Cantonment Boards.

This decision has been intimated to the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and the Members of Parliament concerned.

Posting Air Attaches in Indian Diplomatic Missions

4150. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) since when have Air Attaches in the Indian diplomatic missions in Brazil, South Africa, China and Turkey have not been posted;

(b) the reasons therefor; and

(c) the number of diplomatic Missions abroad where the Air Attaches have not been posted and since when?